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ABSTRACT

This paper asserts that companies need to reconcile the necessity to adapt to local needs while maintaining a global efficiency. In this context, this paper examines pedagogical approaches developed in Europe for courses in international management. EAP (European School of Management) is a management curriculum organized around European concepts of managing diversity and integrating otherness. In the EAP curriculum, students from all over Europe enroll in a 3-year program, with each year in a different branch of the school (Paris, Madrid, Berlin, or Oxford). The ESCP-EAP (Paris Graduate School of Management-European School of Management) Management School, following European company patterns, carries on an internationalization bilateral transfer process as the school transfers into its own activities and management the competence it acquires in foreign environments and in relations with foreign partners. (Contains 24 references.) (SLD)

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Global Centricity: Interaction Among International Students/Faculty in Non US Settings

Beatrice Collin

2001

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Global Centricity :
Interaction among international students/faculty in non US settings

Abstract

Companies need to reconcile the necessity to adapt to local needs while maintaining a global efficiency following three principles:

. cultivate differentiation rather than homogenisation

. cultivate interdependence

. build coordination mechanisms for collaboration and integration rather than control.

European companies are developing new practices. European identity is marked by a convergent movement standing on common principles and values; but it is also made of oppositions coexisting in a mosaic of micro-spaces. The history of such contrast has taught European companies to function on the basis of differentiation and homogenisation; managing diversity and integrating otherness.

It is therefore interesting to look at pedagogical approaches developed in Europe for courses in international management.

EAP is a Management curriculum organised around such concepts: students from all over Europe enrol in a three-year programme, spending each of the years at a different branch of the school (Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Oxford) and studying in multicultural settings. They experience global diversity and learn from it.

Subsequently, the ESCP-EAP Management School, following European company patterns, carries on an internationalisation bilateral transfer process: the school transfers into its own activities, its own management, its own organisation, competence acquired in foreign environments and in relation with foreign partners. By learning about new realities, the school learns how to handle diversity and increase its effectiveness. The multiple ties constitute a process of sharing (of competence and know-how, of knowledge, of national and managerial cultures) and produces a movement of co-construction leading to new patterns in management education.

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1. Emerging practices in international business

The emerging practices linked to the global development of the firms can be described through a conceptual mechanism or a dialectic. First, the firm, with its core business, organisation and management; second, the « others » : customers, suppliers, partners, institutions. These belong to different cultures : national, professional and organisational. They have their own logic and vision of their environment and business.

Thanks to this dialectic between the firm and the « others » we can distinguish between :

- a simple process of international development, i.e. export of goods and services, that we can describe through a mechanism of unilateral transfer,
- an original process of global development that we can understand and explain through a mechanism of bilateral transfer.

1.1. Mechanism of unilateral transfer

Advancement in external markets is founded on a progressive and concentric path, passing from the "familiar to the foreign" in small, successive steps (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Bilkey, 1978); in a continuous learning process of the international (Johanson & Widersheim-Paul, 1975; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977; Welch & Luostarinen, 1988; Andersen, 1993). The « classical » mechanism of internationalisation can be described as follows : a firm exports products, services and know-how that incorporate the distinctive skills developed on its national market. A mechanism of unilateral transfer between a firm focused on a national logic and customers or partners focused on another reality. To go international, the firm will seek to apply to a foreign market an approach tried and tested on its own market. The foreign

market will thus be apprehended through representations the firm has constructed on its national market which it will transfer by a process of homosthesia to another territory.

This mechanism is described in figure 1.

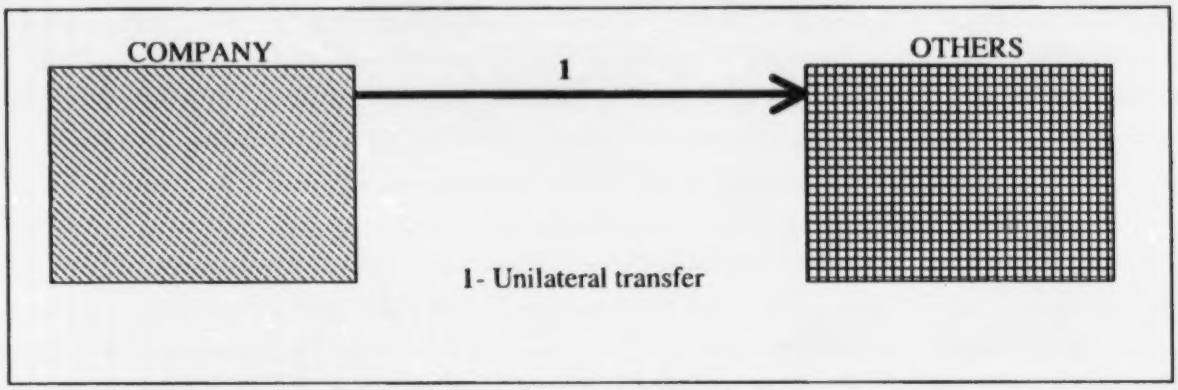

Figure 1 : Mechanism of unilateral transfer

1.2. Mechanism of bilateral transfer

The other body of research on international business management concerns highly internationalised companies with operations in numerous markets, and which are qualified according to the research as either multinational or global. These works emphasise attitudes, strategic positions, or organisational models.... In fact, the growing numbers of global companies in the international arena today is undeniable. As a consequence, several questions arise. When studying management practices, in particular, important issues inevitably surface. In fact, the globalisation of companies, the internationalisation of organisations engenders a growing diversity in the mentalities and expectations of the partners, clients and managers. It appears increasingly difficult to apply a single and global management model to organisations comprising people with different value systems and behaviours. Globalisation now demands that every international company be willing to face the complexity of integrating distinct

value and thought systems. Earlier works (H.V. Perlmutter, 1969) had already shown that a global company had to adopt a "geocentric" organisation, which, while clearly complex (interdependence subsidiaries/parent companies, search for collaboration and consensus between highly differentiated entities, global integration of decision-making), was the only means for companies to meet the challenge of globalisation. More recently, M.A. Porter (1986) showed that the core issue for companies aspiring to grow internationally was to find the optimum synthesis – both from a strategic and an organisational vantage point – between a global perspective and a local perspective. But it was especially the works of Bartlett and Ghoshal (1987) that demonstrated the necessity for international companies to be able to reconcile the demands of local adaptation and the need for global effectiveness. Through the model of the "transnational" company, the following fundamental principles emerge:

- Companies must promote differentiation rather than homogenisation. Different entities, operating in a variety of local environments, can not be organised or managed according to a single model.
- Companies must promote interdependence between the parent company and its subsidiaries, rather than dependence or independence. Interdependence means here sharing information and resources, cooperating in problem-solving, and implementing plans collectively.

An organisation thus differentiated and interdependent assumes the introduction of both formal and informal coordination mechanisms, where collaboration and integration have to replace classic control (Prahalad & Doz, 1981; Forsgren, 1990, Hedlund & Rolander, 1990; Malnight, 1997). When the firm embarks on a process of global development of its business, the transfer mechanism becomes bilateral : the firm will transfer to its core business, organisation and management the skills developed on foreign markets or with foreign

partners. It will not only acknowledge the « others » but will integrate them in its own identity (Dredge, 1985 ; Humes, 1993 ; Deephouse, 1999 ; O'Donnell, 2000). The fact of the « others » being numerous and different involves an essential feature of this original process of development : by dealing with new realities, companies learn to operate within diversity, to manage it with relevance and effectiveness. The organisation forges links with the « others » which will grow and interchange. It implements sharing processes : skills, knowledge, national and managerial cultures (Earl, 1989 ; Ghoshal, 1997 ; Franklin, 2000). By doing so it enables processes of joint construction between itself and others to emerge, as well as the setting up of joint mechanisms for projects, activities, tools and decisions. This is described in figure 2.

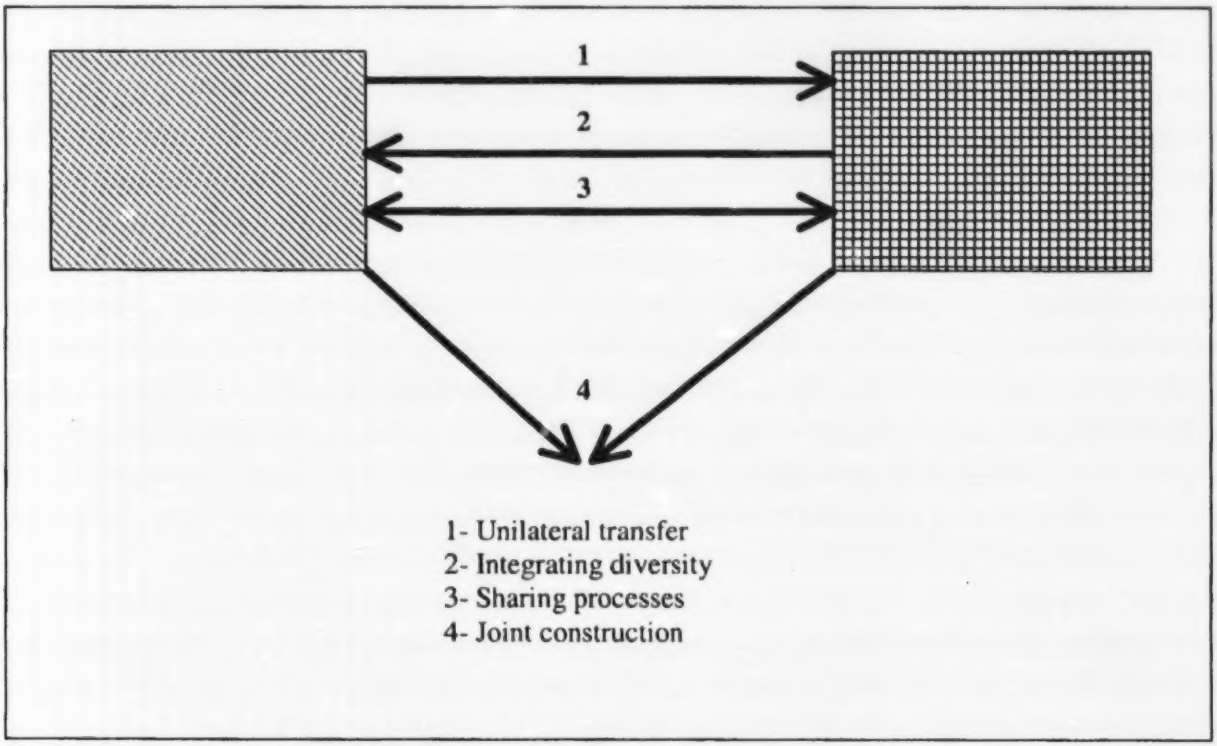

Figure 2 : Mechanism of bilateral transfer

In this way new management practises emerge which are worth studying because they involve profound changes for organisations going in this direction; such a route, difficult at times, requires to be better signposted and in certain cases accompanied. Second, it raises the question of the ability of managers to operate easily in the new organisational setup, to manage diversity in a relevant and effective way, to acknowledge and accept otherness, to share knowledge and culture and above all, in the face of new forms of expression of power, to lead appropriately (Barham & Oates, 1991 ; Rhinesmith, Williamson, Ehlen & Maxwell, 1995 ; Adler & Bartholomew, 1995).

2. Emergence of a European model

For a number of years now, European firms have been dealing with the management of diversity and the integration of otherness, which, as we have seen, are at the core of the main strategic and managerial perspectives of international companies. In fact, European identity is characterised by a convergent movement founded on a strong attachment to common values and principles (Hersant, 1991). But, at the same time, opposites and a mosaic of micro-spaces co-exist within Europe. Cultural habits of European countries arise from concepts of living in a society and from governing multifaceted peoples. Such a kaleidoscope thus compelled European companies to accept and focus on the particularities of the various countries where they operated. Hence, European management today is characterised by an acceptance of differences tied to multiple affinities and an integrated diversity (Collomb & Hoestlandt, 1991).

Strategic and management practices in European companies could thus be considered as interesting examples to study (Stopford, 1993) because they have had to experiment for a long

time with diversity management and the integration of otherness, an issue essential for any company which, regardless of its country of origin, chooses to go international today.

European management schools have, for several years now, integrated this questioning into the definition of their teaching and curricula, in order to prepare their students for this essential feature of their environment. As a result, pedagogical approaches were constructed which endeavour to:

- Explain, clarify, create awareness of the existence of distinct thought systems in order to prepare the future managers to integrate otherness
- explore, elaborate and construct complex strategic, organisational and managerial processes which are able to combine unity and diversity.

In this way, an analysis of these pedagogical approaches initiated in Europe brings to light a number of interesting insights into designing courses and programmes which integrate the international dimension of management.

We shall now present in more detail the example of EAP's curriculum, which was created more than 20 years ago, specifically to prepare future European managers for the challenges in business globalisation. Then, we shall be able to see how this experience is one of the cornerstones in the development of a leading European business school, ESCP-EAP, whose purpose is to provide "a real transnational management education".

3. EAP : a programme created specifically to meet new European and international challenges

The EAP-European School of Management was founded in 1973 and located in Paris, Oxford, Berlin and Madrid. It was the first European School to offer all its students a three-year programme in three different European countries. The truly multinational classes are

made up of students recruited from all over Europe. There are in average 15 nationalities with no dominant country. The conviction has been that industry's need for managers who are both operational and truly internationally open-minded has not been fully met by national schools with traditional curricula and conventional exchange programmes. Thorough theoretical preparation provides the educational base, but the capacity to work across countries and to implement acquired knowledge can only really be learned with specific teaching methods combined with a sufficiently long period of exposure in a foreign country. Therefore, objectives of such a programme have been to prepare managers with a strong academic profile who are truly international –from study and experience- and operational – doers as well as analysts. Following key skills should be acquired through the 3-year EAP programme :

- a thorough grounding in general management concepts and techniques for application in a European and international context
- an ability to understand and assess the problems and opportunities facing business organisations in both a European and international context
- essential management skills and an ability to work as a member of multi-cultural, international teams
- critical thinking and analytical skills as well as integrative, innovative abilities
- potential for self-direction and personal development with specific reference to an international career.

<u>The programme structure</u>

The programme structure is designed through a 3-year, 3-country, 3-language structure. Currently, two streams of study are available : Paris/Oxford/Berlin and Oxford/Madrid/Paris.

The overall structure is as follows :

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
	FRANCE Working Language : French	UNITED KINGDOM Working language : English	GERMANY Working Language : German
	UNITED KINGDOM Working language : English	SPAIN Working Language : Spanish	FRANCE Working Language : French
Term 1	Introduction to European Business and Culture Management Modules	Cultural introduction Management Modules Company Consultancy project	Cultural Introduction Advanced Electives Management modules European research project
Term 2	In-Company Placement	In-Company Placement	International management programme European research project
Term 3	Management Modules	Management Modules European research project	In-Company Placement

Figure 3 : The EAP programme structure

Within each country students take up a 3-month in-company placement as well as a number of shorter project-based assignments. They also undertake a major European Research Project which tackles a single, international business issue.

The programme teaching approach

To meet the goal of educating operational international managers, the programme teaching approach has encompassed three dimensions :

- Knowledge : This is imparted through the « taught » management programme as well as through individual and group project work. The core programme is structured in a way which encourages integration of management disciplines. The introduction to European Business and Culture programme and the final year International Management programme are both fully integrative taking the European/International firm as reference. The core management modules are delivered in a way which facilitates cross-discipline perspectives. Courses have a target ratio of one-third large class formal input (lectures), one third small group participation/preparation and one third larger group participative exchange (presentation/discussion). This target obviously varies according to the nature of the different courses. Moreover, many modules have the target of using computer based application such as interactive cases, exercises or mini-business games.
- Skills : The programme strongly emphasises the development of individual and group skills relevant to the future European/International manager, reinforcing the acquisition of management theory. This is achieved within the teaching programme both through its content and by the participative and case-based methods employed. More significantly, the non-classroom based activities place skills development as the major objective along with the application of acquired knowledge.
- Attitudes : The above mix of School-based and project-based activities place the student in constantly changing multi-cultural situations which are equally critical in developing

the future European/International manager. Within the core management programme, students are members of multi-national teams tackling different management disciplines in different countries. Within the applied parts of the curriculum, students find themselves in widely different business contexts in terms of country, company size and culture, industry sector and organisational function

Finally, they are exposed to the wider social, economic and extra-curriculum life involved in moving as a multi-national group across 3 countries and 3 years.

For now more than 20 years, EAP has graduated students who have experienced a distinctive approach to business education. If we refer to emerging practices in international business, such a programme appears to meet industry's needs for managers with a strong academic background as well as with truly international skills and attitudes.

But this has not occurred without encountering a number of difficulties:

- On the student side: Initially, it was not easy, at the outset of this programme, to convince young people from different European countries to enrol in a unique and innovative curriculum rather than a more traditional programme. While today the necessity of attaining a solid grounding in international management is universally accepted, this was not necessarily the case several years ago. The surge in business globalisation and the growing recognition of the EAP programme have largely alleviated this recruitment difficulty.

  In addition, the EAP curriculum requires all students to master at least 2, if not 3, foreign languages other than their native language. This assumes on their part prior in-depth linguistic training, or a major effort in language learning once enrolled in the EAP programme. The language courses taught at EAP aim at operational effectiveness: The

students must be able, within a very short timeframe, to take classes in a foreign language, to handle in-company assignments, and of course, to be able to communicate fluently in their everyday lives. Experience has shown that the closer the date when the language must be used, the greater the motivation; in general, the linguistic difficulty of the programme – provided adequate language training was offered – was never a real obstacle to recruiting qualified students, nor a reason for failure during the academic programme. Finally, if through this curriculum students have a genuine opportunity to be exposed to the new opportunities of international management, it is nevertheless clear that the 3-year programme remains an individual challenge to be met. It is not easy, in fact, to move to a foreign country on one's own, for a relatively lengthy period, to work continually in groups made up of different nationalities, to integrate new conceptual frameworks, and to face a whole slew of questions for which their previous studies offered no preparation. This experience, this learning, while long and sometimes difficult, remains, however, one of the core strengths of the EAP programme.

- On the faculty side: the main issue was to associate with this programme professors with solid academic credentials who were also eager to design and implement innovative pedagogical methods, adapted to the EAP programme philosophy. These teachers must themselves be open to otherness and diversity; as they face students with different cognitive references. Furthermore, in both the teaching content and methods, the academic grounding has to be applied to international management problem-solving, and to companies operating internationally. It has not always been easy for EAP to recruit professors offering such a profile. And, once recruited, the teachers need time to devote to their own learning and to successfully performing their job in such an environment.

- From the programme management side: the cost of managing such a programme remains relatively high and complex. However, new information technologies have facilitated the resolution of a number of difficulties. But, as in the case of the faculty, it is not always easy to find qualified people capable of innovating and managing this level of diversity. This necessitates for all involved, a lengthy and sometimes arduous learning process.

In conclusion, we can say that if the EAP programme, as created in 1973 and as evolved to meet the new challenges of international management, has forged a position in the European education market, this has not always been accomplished without difficulty, and a number of issues must still be addressed. Nonetheless, a true know-how has emerged; a know-how which will now be available to the newly merged ESCP-EAP group.

4. ESCP-EAP : The challenge for a truly international academic institution

ESCP-EAP was created 2 years ago through the merger of ESCP, a French graduate business school founded in 1918, recognised for its solid academic level, and EAP, which, as we have seen, has been recognised since its inception as a centre for innovative programmes, particularly well adapted to the new international conditions of European companies. Now it is a matter of combining, in a vastly larger whole, know-how acquired over a number of years. Like companies, the institution's path towards a truly transnational organisation, operating in several countries, requires a transformation of management practices and organisational models. The development of new practices such as those we have described previously relative to companies, represents today a real challenge for ESCP-EAP: integration of otherness, sharing, co-construction of projects and activities between the entities present in culturally differentiated environments, a balance between unity and

diversity. As in the case of companies, questions of monitoring and coordination arise; it entails a veritable knowledge management between the 2 institutions, with a formal sharing of scholarship between the 2 institutions, and within the institutions a sharing between the departments themselves; more profoundly, this is leading the institution to fashion a new identity that will be all the stronger because of the integration of essential foundations emanating from the past.

We can now witness an actual mirror-image: ESCP-EAP has established the objectives of educating managers capable of flexibility in diversity, of recognising and accepting otherness, of managing effectively projects and operations in increasingly international companies. And, in parallel, the institution has to elaborate and construct new managerial practices itself, with new organisational models which fit into its strategy of being a truly transnational institution.

We feel it was of interest to show in this paper the new management education patterns now in the making in a leading European institution. We trust that this presentation will bring a new perspective, and will nourish our reflection on constructing academic programmes that integrate the new management conditions faced by increasingly global companies operating more and more at an international level.

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